

# 2018 Montana Hunting Regulations

# Bison



These regulations and quotas are adopted under the authority granted to the Fish & Wildlife Commission (F&W Commission) in MCA 87-1-301, and are valid March 1, 2018 through February 28, 2019. These regulations were adopted by the F&W Commission on February 15, 2018. The F&W Commission reserves the authority to amend the seasons, limits and regulations herein if deemed necessary for wildlife management purposes. Martha Williams, Director.

State and Federal laws, Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or disability. Anyone believing he or she has been discriminated against (as described above) in any Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) program, activity, or facility may write to FWP Personnel Office, 1420 East Sixth Avenue, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701 or the office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

## Licensing

- A hunter may hold only one bison license.
- Bison licenses are allotted through a random drawing.
- Hunters must have applied for a bison license by May 1, 2018.
- Successful either-sex bison license applicants:
  - will receive a letter with instructions to view online bison hunter orientation.
  - hunters wishing to use **archery** equipment **MUST** also complete a mandatory archery orientation outlined in the letter sent to successful either-sex applicants.
- Potential second choice hunters will only be contacted in the event of the hunt roster being implemented. All bison second choice applicants are given a roster number. Applicants can visit MyFWP at [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) to see their position on the roster prior to Dec. 31, 2018. To check the status of the hunt and to see whether the hunt roster has been implemented, call the bison hotline at 406-994-5700 during the hunting season.
- State-issued Tribal licenses will be issued free-of-charge by Helena Headquarters.

License cost:	Resident	Nonresident
Conservation	\$8	\$10
Base Hunting License	\$10	\$15
Bison Application Fee	\$10	\$50
Bison License	\$125	\$1250

## Bison License Quota

- A total of 85 either-sex State-issued licenses will be awarded. State-issued Tribal licenses are in addition to this.
- Second choice only licenses - up to 200 Second Choice State-issued licenses **MAY** be incrementally awarded depending upon bison migration into individual hunting districts.
  - The second choice hunt roster will be created from the drawing of second choice applicants. If a roster hunt is implemented based upon bison migration, second choice licenses will be issued to hunters incrementally in sequence drawn.
- Nonresidents are limited to, but not guaranteed, 10 percent of the hunting district's license quota.
- In addition to the 85 either-sex State-issued licenses and the potential 200 second choice State-issued licenses, Tribal treaty bison hunting may occur concurrently with state bison hunting.

1,400 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of \$0.20 per copy, for a total cost of \$277, which includes \$277 for printing and \$0 for distribution

## Bison Hunt Areas and Seasons

- The season is November 15, 2018 through February 15, 2019. The Absaroka Beartooth backcountry hunt dates are September 15 through November 14.
- Bison hunt information is available by calling 1-406-994-5700 during the hunting season.
- License quotas, hunting district boundaries, and season structure can be modified by F&W Commission authority.
- There are two hunting districts:
  - **HD 385** – Gardiner Basin Portion AND Absaroka Beartooth Portion (wilderness north of Yellowstone National Park including the upper portions of the Hellroaring and Slough Creek drainages). See map, legal descriptions and hunting closures in these regulations.
  - **HD 395** – Madison Watershed Portion AND Gallatin Watershed Portion. See map, legal descriptions and hunting closures in the legal descriptions in these regulations.
- Hunting is allowed on public land. State-licensed hunting is also allowed on private land with landowner permission.
- Hunting is subject to emergency closure in the event it becomes necessary to allow for hazing under the Interagency Bison Management Plan.
- Closure area to protect eagle-nesting sites on National Forest System Lands on Horse Butte Peninsula as posted from Dec. 1 to Aug. 15.
- **Mandatory Reporting:** Successful bison hunters must report their harvested bison within 48 hours by calling 1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) or 406-444-0356.

### ----- HD 385 -----

**NOTE:** A bison hunter list will be created from a random drawing of all second choice applicants for HD385. Hunters may or may not be activated based upon bison presence. Successful bison hunters must report their harvested bison within 48 hours by calling 1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) or 406-444-0356.

### 385-20: 40 licenses

- Nov 15 - Feb 15 – Either Sex.

### 385-21: 5 licenses. Only valid in the Absaroka Beartooth portion of the HD. This is a wilderness backcountry hunt.

**NOTE:** The Absaroka-Beartooth portion is a very remote wilderness accessible only by foot or horse. Retrieving a harvested bison will present an extraordinary challenge. A mature bull bison can weigh 2,000 pounds and yield 800 pounds of meat. Hunters must be prepared to pack out this amount of meat, as well as the head and hide if desired, and to care for the meat properly in order to avoid spoilage. It is not recommended that hunters attempt this hunt without a string of pack-animals capable of this task and several additional people to assist with processing the harvested animal.

- Sept 15 - Nov 14 – Either Sex.

### 385-77: Bison Hunt Roster

- Nov 15 - Feb 15 – Second Choice only license. See "NOTE" above.

### ----- HD 395 -----

**NOTE:** A bison hunter list will be created from a random drawing of all second choice applicants for HD395. Hunters may or may not be activated based upon bison presence. Successful bison hunters must report their harvested bison within 48 hours by calling 1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453) or 406-444-0356.

**\*\*The Gallatin Watershed Portion of Bison HD 395 is CLOSED TO HUNTING\*\***

### 395-20: 40 licenses

- Nov 15 - Feb 15 – Either Sex

### 395-77: Bison Hunt Roster

- Nov 15 - Feb 15 – Second Choice only license. See "NOTE" above.

visit <http://fwp.mt.gov>

## General Regulations AND Methods and Means of Hunting

- Hunting is restricted to individuals with licenses issued via a drawing process similar to that employed for other special licenses issued by FWP or as designated by Tribal authority. All licenses are non-transferable.
- General regulations as listed in the 2018 Deer•Elk•Antelope hunting regulations shall govern the 2018 Bison season for all license holders.
- All bison hunters must wear hunter orange as described in 2018 Deer•Elk•Antelope hunting regulations regardless of season dates.
- Please refer to the 2018 Deer•Elk•Antelope hunting regulations for a description of firearms and archery equipment.
  - The only means of taking allowed are center-fire rifles and/or archery equipment. Crossbows and muzzleloading black powder rifles are not permitted.
  - Rifles are restricted to center-fire, 150 grain or larger bullet.
  - Hunters wishing to harvest bison with archery equipment must complete the mandatory archery orientation course at:  
<http://fwp.mt.gov>
- To protect public safety and minimize traffic obstructions, no bison hunting is allowed within 100 yards of major highways.
- Hunting on national forest lands must follow restrictions in USFS order 36 CFR 261.10 (d) (firearm discharges are prohibited within 150 yards of residence, building, campsite, developed recreation site, or occupied area or across a forest service road or body of water).
- Hunting hours authorized for the taking of big game animals begin one-half hour before sunrise and end one-half hour after sunset each day of the hunting season. See official 2018 Sunrise-Sunset Tables in these regulations.
- Hunting shall be only by foot or horseback.
- It is unlawful to possess or transport the fetus or reproductive tissues of a bison away from the kill site. This shall not include specifically minimized tissues naturally attached to the carcass or a portion of the carcass as necessary for evidence of sex as follows:
  - Male: head with horns or penis.
  - Female: head with horns or vulva.
- Hunters who harvest a bison shall, upon field dressing the carcass, cut open the rumen and remove and spread its vegetative contents.
- Hunters who harvest a bison near a roadway or any other facility shall remove all unutilized parts of the carcass (entrails, tissues, bones, hides, fetuses, legs, etc.) to an area at least 200 yards from any roadway, dwelling, campground, designated trail or trailhead. These unutilized parts shall be placed in a manner as to be inconspicuous to passersby.

## Information and Recommendations

- Bison can achieve a live weight of up to 2,000 pounds, and can be very difficult for the average person to field dress alone. Participants should bring several people with them, or hire an outfitter to assist with the field dressing and handling of their bison. If participants plan to field dress and load their own animal, axes, knives, saws, and block and tackle may be necessary.
- Due to the bison's immense size and thick hide, palatable meat may spoil quickly without immediate and proper care. It is recommended that bison be skinned and quartered within five hours of the kill. The hide should not be left on the bison overnight, even if it is hanging.

## Brucellosis

- Bison in Yellowstone National Park carry bacteria that cause a disease known as brucellosis or Bang's disease. Brucellosis in Yellowstone National Park bison is one of the primary reasons that attempts are being made to control bison in Montana.
- Brucellosis in bison is caused by a bacterium that can also infect humans. In humans, brucellosis is called undulant fever. Symptoms include intermittent fever, chills, night sweats, body aches, poor appetite and weakness. If undulant fever is treated early, it is fairly easy to cure. However, if the disease reaches a chronic stage, treatment is difficult.
- In bison, the bacteria is concentrated in the lymph nodes, reproductive organs and the udder. Cooking destroys bacteria that may be present in the meat. Thus, when thoroughly cooked, the meat is safe to eat.

2 Turn In Poachers – Enough is Enough! Call: 1-800-TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668)

## Bison Hunt Legal Descriptions

The following areas are open to bison hunting for the 2018 season.

**Note:** No hunting within the city limits of West Yellowstone, no hunting within the fenced boundary of the West Yellowstone airport and closure area to protect eagle-nesting sites on National Forest System Lands on Horse Butte Peninsula as posted from Dec. 1 to Aug. 15.

### HUNTING DISTRICT 385:

**Gardiner Basin Portion** – Beginning at the boundary intersection of Yellowstone National Park and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness just east of Gardiner, then northerly and westerly along said Wilderness boundary to USFS Trail #64 near the Bear Creek campground, then northerly along said trail to the intersection with USFS Trail #62, then northwesterly along USFS Trail #62 to the watershed divide east of Monitor Peak, then northwesterly along the watershed divide over Monitor Peak to Red Mountain, then southwesterly along the watershed divide to Dome Mountain, then southwesterly in a direct line to the bison-resistant cattle guard across U.S. HWY 89 in Yankee Jim Canyon, then southerly in a direct line to crest of watershed divide between Sphinx Creek and Tom Miner Creek Basin, then southerly along the watershed divide over Black Mountain to the boundary of Yellowstone National Park at Shooting Star Mountain, then generally east along the Yellowstone National Park boundary to the boundary intersection of Yellowstone National Park and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness just east of Gardiner, the point of beginning.

**NOTE: Gardiner Hunting Closure:** Closed to all hunting: Beginning at the Junction of U.S. Hwy 89 and Little Trail Creek, then up Little Trail Creek to the posted line (approx. 1/2 mile above U.S. Hwy 89), then southeasterly along said line to the Travertine-Trail Creek Road, then easterly along said road to its intersection with the Gardiner-Jardine Road, then northeasterly along said road to Eagle Creek, then southerly down said creek to the Yellowstone National Park boundary, then westerly along said boundary to the intersection with Stevens Creek, then northeasterly in a straight line to the intersection with U.S. Hwy 89, then northwesterly along said highway to the junction of Little Trail Creek, the point of beginning.

### **AND**

**Absaroka Beartooth Portion** – (wilderness north of Yellowstone National Park including the upper portions of the Hellroaring and Slough Creek drainages) – The entire Hellroaring, Buffalo Fork, and Slough Creek drainages north of Yellowstone National Park.

### HUNTING DISTRICT 395:

**Gallatin Watershed Portion - CLOSED TO HUNTING** -Those portions of Gallatin and Madison Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at the intersection of Buck Creek and the Gallatin River, then up Buck Creek to the Madison-Gallatin Rivers divide, then south and east along said divide to the Yellowstone National Park boundary, then northerly along said boundary to its intersection with the Gallatin-Yellowstone Rivers divide, then in a northerly direction along said divide to Eaglehead Mountain, then in a westerly and northerly direction along the Portal Creek-Porcupine Creek divide and along the Porcupine Creek-Levenski Creek divide to the Gallatin River near the mouth of the West Fork of the Gallatin River, then southerly up the Gallatin River to Buck Creek, the point of beginning.

### **AND**

**Madison Watershed Portion** - Those portions of Gallatin County lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning where the western boundary of Yellowstone National Park intersects the Montana-Idaho border, then northerly along the Yellowstone National Park boundary to the Gallatin-Madison Rivers watershed divide, then northwesterly along said divide to the headwaters of Beaver Creek, then south along Beaver Creek to its confluence with Earthquake Lake, then along the south shore of Quake Lake and Hebgen Lake to the South Fork of the Madison River, then southerly and easterly along the west shore of said river to Forest Road 478, then southwest along Forest Road 478 to Reas Pass at the border of Idaho, then south and east along the Montana-Idaho border to the point of the beginning.

## Common Sense Precautions When Field-Dressing Big Game

- To minimize risk of disease or parasite transmission to humans, follow these proper ways to handle wild meat:
  - Consider every bison to be potentially infected. The results of blood tests show that about 50 percent of the bison are exposed to brucellosis.
  - Always wear protective gloves when dressing carcasses or handling viscera.
  - Minimize contact with animal fluids, brain and spinal tissues.
  - Avoid contact with milk or material from the reproductive tract.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth until you have scrubbed after handling the animal.
  - Individuals with open sores or cuts on their hands should be especially careful.
  - Discard organ meats.
  - Wash hands and instruments thoroughly after field dressing or processing.
- To minimize risk of disease or parasite transmission to your domestic dog, prevent consumption of big game viscera.

## 2018 Sunrise-Sunset Tables for Determining Hunting Hours

These tables, including adjustments for daylight savings time, are the official sunrise-sunset tables adopted by the Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission for hunting in Montana. Authorized hunting hours for the taking of bison begin one-half hour before sunrise and end one-half hour after sunset each day of the hunting season. (**Do not use other sources**).

### ZONE 2

**INCLUDES: Beaverhead, Broadwater, Cascade, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, Glacier, Hill, Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, Liberty, Madison, Meagher, Park, Pondera, Powell, Silver Bow, Teton and Toole Counties.**

Day	Sept		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb	
	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set	Rise	Set
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
01	6:48	8:07	7:27	7:08	8:10	6:13	7:52	4:42	8:12	4:51	7:52	5:32
02	6:50	8:05	7:28	7:06	8:12	6:11	7:53	4:42	8:12	4:52	7:51	5:33
03	6:51	8:03	7:30	7:04	8:13	6:10	7:54	4:42	8:12	4:53	7:50	5:35
04	6:52	8:01	7:31	7:02	7:14	5:08	7:55	4:41	8:12	4:54	7:48	5:36
05	6:53	7:59	7:32	7:00	7:16	5:07	7:56	4:41	8:12	4:55	7:47	5:38
06	6:55	7:57	7:34	6:58	7:17	5:06	7:57	4:41	8:12	4:56	7:46	5:40
07	6:56	7:55	7:35	6:56	7:19	5:04	7:58	4:41	8:12	4:58	7:44	5:41
08	6:57	7:53	7:36	6:54	7:20	5:03	7:59	4:41	8:11	4:59	7:43	5:43
09	6:58	7:51	7:38	6:52	7:22	5:02	8:00	4:41	8:11	5:00	7:41	5:44
10	7:00	7:49	7:39	6:50	7:23	5:00	8:01	4:41	8:11	5:01	7:40	5:46
11	7:01	7:47	7:40	6:49	7:25	4:59	8:02	4:41	8:10	5:02	7:38	5:47
12	7:02	7:45	7:42	6:47	7:26	4:58	8:03	4:41	8:10	5:04	7:37	5:49
13	7:04	7:43	7:43	6:45	7:28	4:57	8:04	4:41	8:09	5:05	7:35	5:50
14	7:05	7:41	7:44	6:43	7:29	4:56	8:05	4:41	8:09	5:06	7:34	5:52
15	7:06	7:40	7:46	6:41	7:30	4:55	8:06	4:41	8:08	5:07	7:32	5:53
16	7:07	7:38	7:47	6:39	7:32	4:54	8:06	4:41	8:07	5:09	7:30	5:55
17	7:09	7:36	7:49	6:38	7:33	4:53	8:07	4:42	8:07	5:10	7:29	5:56
18	7:10	7:34	7:50	6:36	7:35	4:52	8:08	4:42	8:06	5:11	7:27	5:58
19	7:11	7:32	7:51	6:34	7:36	4:51	8:08	4:42	8:05	5:13	7:25	5:59
20	7:13	7:30	7:53	6:32	7:37	4:50	8:09	4:43	8:05	5:14	7:24	6:01
21	7:14	7:28	7:54	6:30	7:39	4:49	8:09	4:43	8:04	5:16	7:22	6:02
22	7:15	7:26	7:56	6:29	7:40	4:48	8:10	4:44	8:03	5:17	7:20	6:04
23	7:16	7:24	7:57	6:27	7:42	4:47	8:10	4:44	8:02	5:19	7:19	6:05
24	7:18	7:22	7:59	6:25	7:43	4:46	8:11	4:45	8:01	5:20	7:17	6:07
25	7:19	7:20	8:00	6:24	7:44	4:46	8:11	4:46	8:00	5:21	7:15	6:08
26	7:20	7:18	8:01	6:22	7:46	4:45	8:11	4:46	7:59	5:23	7:13	6:09
27	7:22	7:16	8:03	6:20	7:47	4:45	8:12	4:47	7:58	5:24	7:11	6:11
28	7:23	7:14	8:04	6:19	7:48	4:44	8:12	4:48	7:57	5:26	7:10	6:12
29	7:24	7:12	8:06	6:17	7:49	4:43	8:12	4:49	7:56	5:27		
30	7:26	7:10	8:07	6:16	7:51	4:43	8:12	4:49	7:55	5:29		
31			8:09	6:14			8:12	4:50	7:53	5:30		

## Contacts

Bison hunt information is available by calling 1-406-994-5700 during the hunting season.

### Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks State Headquarters

1420 East 6th Avenue, PO Box 200701,  
Helena, MT 59620-0701 .....406-444-2535

**Harvest Reporting .....1-877-FWP-WILD (1-877-397-9453)  
.....or 406-444-0356**

Hunter Education.....406-444-9948

Wildlife Bureau .....406-444-2612

Enforcement Bureau.....406-444-2452

Parks Division (Montana State Parks).....406-444-3750

Special drawings .....406-444-2950

Resident and nonresident licensing.....406-444-2535

Hearing Impaired (use Montana  
Relay).....7-1-1 or 1-800-253-4091

### Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Regional Headquarters



#### REGION 1

490 N Meridian Rd  
Kalispell, MT 59901  
(406) 752-5501

#### LEWISTOWN Area Res Office (LARO)

333 Airport Rd  
PO Box 938  
Lewistown, MT 59457  
(406) 538-4658

#### REGION 2

3201 Spurgin Rd  
Missoula, MT 59804  
(406) 542-5500

#### REGION 3

1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Bozeman, MT 59718  
(406) 994-4042

#### REGION 5

2300 Lake Elmo Dr  
Billings, MT 59105  
(406) 247-2940

HELENA Area Res Office  
(HARO)  
930 Custer Ave W  
Helena, MT 59620  
(406) 495-3260

#### REGION 6

1 Airport Rd  
Glasgow, MT 59230  
(406) 228-3700

BUTTE Area Res Office  
(BARO)  
1820 Meadowlark Ln  
Butte, MT 59701  
(406) 494-1953

HAVRE Area Res Office  
(HvARO)  
2165 Hwy 2 E  
Havre, MT 59501  
(406) 265-6177

#### REGION 4

4600 Giant Springs Rd  
Great Falls, MT 59405  
(406) 454-5840

#### REGION 7

352 I-94 Business Loop  
PO Box 1630  
Miles City, MT 59301  
(406) 234-0900

## Contacts Outside Fish, Wildlife & Parks

### Montana State Agencies

Agriculture  
406-444-3144  
Guides & Outfitters  
406-841-2300  
Livestock  
406-444-7323  
State Lands  
406-444-2074  
Tourism  
406-841-2870

### Land Maps

Bureau of Land Management  
406-896-5000  
Topographical (USGS)  
888-275-8747

### Tribal Lands

Blackfeet Reservation  
406-338-7276  
Crow Reservation  
406-638-2179  
Flathead Reservation  
406-883-2888  
ext 7200 or 7273  
Fort Belknap  
406-353-2205  
Fort Peck Reservation  
406-768-5305  
Northern Cheyenne Reservation  
406-477-6526  
Rocky Boy Reservation  
406-395-4207

### Federal Agencies

US Department of Interior  
202-208-3100  
US Fish & Wildlife Service  
406-449-5225  
US Forest Service  
406-329-3511  
Bureau of Land Management  
406-896-5000  
National Weather Service  
406-329-4840 (Missoula)





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